



**National
Foreign
Assessment
Center**

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Africa Review

26 January 1979

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AFRICA REVIEW (U)

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Rhodesia: Potential Problems with the Auxiliary
Forces (U)

Chief Chirau, one of the black coleaders in Rhodesia's transitional government, has threatened to boycott the national election scheduled for April if the other two black leaders in the Executive Council do not disband their auxiliary forces. The auxiliaries, composed mostly of former guerrillas who have accepted the government's amnesty program, have become controversial among whites who question their loyalty and the military's ability to control their activities. It now appears that Chirau, who has no auxiliary forces of his own, plans to make this a major issue among the blacks as well.

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Chirau doubtless is seriously disturbed by the threat the auxiliary forces pose to a free and fair election, but he seems more interested at the present time in raising a political issue than in actually boycotting the election. At the same time, he does not believe the internal settlement that guarantees the final resolution of the Rhodesian crisis, and therefore is attempting to keep open the possibility of future talks

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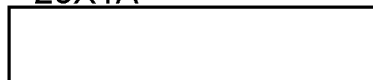
with the guerrillas. His party recently announced that it had authorized Chirau to explore the chances of reaching a political settlement with guerrilla leaders Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo, and he has called on them to meet with the transitional government before the election is held in April.

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Rhodesia: White Referendum (U)

Rhodesian Prime Minister Smith is conducting a vigorous campaign to ensure a positive vote in the 30 January white referendum on the proposed constitution for majority rule government in Rhodesia. The constitution has come under strong attack from several white political fringe groups inside the country, but Smith still commands the support of most whites, and the referendum should pass by a comfortable majority. 

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The proposed constitution, published on 2 January, would give the whites more control than was envisioned in the internal settlement agreement last March that guaranteed the whites 28 of 100 seats in the lower house of the legislature for at least 10 years. In addition, whites will get 10 of 30 seats in the upper house, also for at least a decade, as well as a number of cabinet posts. The constitution would also establish criteria--mainly senior ranks, longevity, and "efficiency and suitability"--that would ensure continued white domination of the military, police, judiciary, and public service.
(U)

Smith has been barnstorming the country, particularly the rural areas, telling whites that a "yes" vote is their only alternative. He concedes that the constitution is not ideal, but argues that "it is the best that we can get under the circumstances." He told a white audience in Umtali in mid-January that it had no choice but to make a settlement for majority rule and that talk of winning the war was "absolute pie in the sky." (U)

Smith also has intimated that the West, especially the United States, will recognize a multiracial government elected under this constitution. White Cominister for Foreign Affairs Van Der Byl emphasized this claim last week, saying that the Rhodesian Government has given up on the United Kingdom and will now devote its efforts to seeking a better relationship with political leaders in the United States. 

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The White Opposition

The most outspoken opponent of the proposed constitution is a newly formed rightwing group called "Save Our Nation." In a series of public broadcasts, it has been urging whites to vote "no" on the grounds that constitutional approval will not bring international recognition, the lifting of sanctions, or an end to the war. The group draws most of its members from a small, ineffective rightwing party, the Rhodesia Movement, and is actively supported by the South Africa - based "Save Rhodesia" movement. The Rhodesia Movement has long advocated dividing the country into Shona, Ndebele, and white states united under a federal system of government and run by a Council of State composed of four representatives from each state. []

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Spokesmen for "Save Our Nation" have been telling whites that the South African military will come to their assistance in the struggle against the guerrillas if the constitution is defeated. While some Rhodesia Movement leaders have recently approached South Africa Defense Ministry officials for political backing and military assistance, South Africa still favors Smith's internal settlement. []

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Smith has also come under attack from the "Rhodesia First Campaign," a front for the Rhodesian Action Party and another extreme rightwing group. The group preaches white hegemony and the total suppression of the guerrillas and their supporters inside the country. It enjoys little popular support and does not pose a serious threat to the Smith government. []

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The liberal National Unifying Force (NUF) has also come out against the constitution, urging a "return to legality" under British rule and the convening of an all-parties conference under the auspices of the Anglo-American plan. Leaders of the NUF are ambivalent about the constitution and are urging the whites to abstain from voting; they believe a "no" vote might ruin the chances for any form of black rule while a "yes" vote would give approval to a constitution that they believe would perpetuate white domination over blacks. NUF has little influence in the white community, however, and its position is not likely to be taken seriously. []

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[REDACTED]

Smith's call for unity and the whites' concern over the political turmoil that would result if the constitution was rejected should sway the vote in favor of approval, thus paving the way for the national election in April and a change of government in May. [REDACTED]

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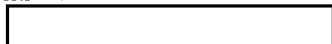
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Botswana-Zambia: Rhodesian Refugees (U)

At the request of the Zimbabwe African People's Union, Zambia reportedly intends to accept some 10,000 Rhodesian refugees from Botswana during the month of February--the largest movement of refugees in the history of the Rhodesian struggle. It is unclear who will finance this operation, which could run over \$1 million; Botswana surely would have difficulty spacing such a sum, and, as a result, the Organization of African Unity or the UN High Commissioner for Refugees may pick up the tab. In any case, the transfer would provide much-needed relief for Botswana, but would severely tax the limits of Zambia's already strained resources. Indeed, both countries are already facing steadily mounting economic and social pressures as a result of their support of the Rhodesian refugees. 

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The Botswana Perspective

Botswana has played a major role in providing black refugees sanctuary from the war in Rhodesia or a route to join ZAPU forces in Zambia. The refugee population in Botswana has increased from around 5,000 in February of last year to about 18,000, a sizable figure in a country with a population of only about 720,000. The camps are overcrowded and large numbers of refugees continue to arrive as a result of stepped-up fighting in Rhodesia. 

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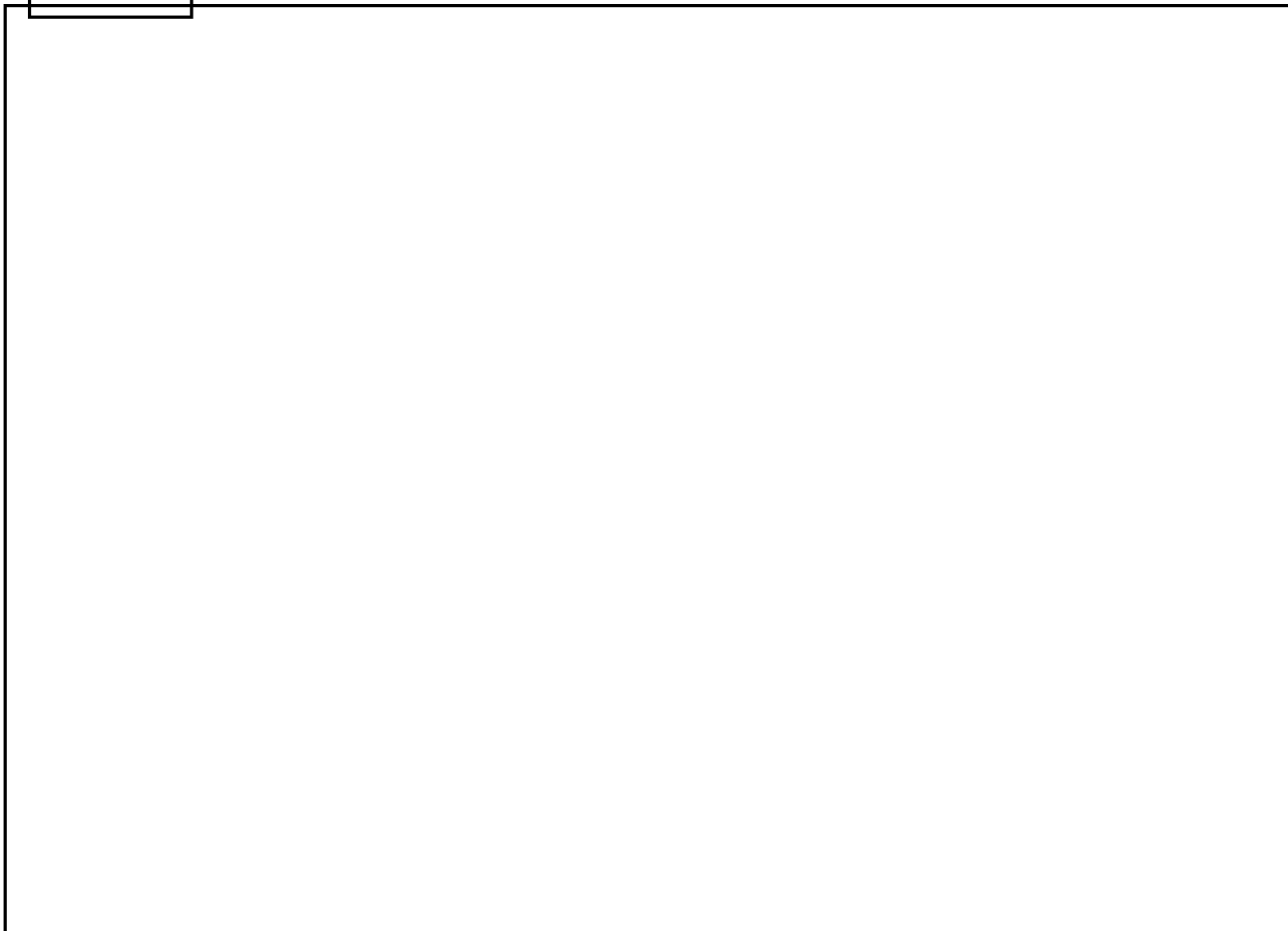
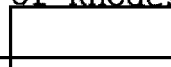
The large number of Rhodesian refugees in Botswana presents the government with serious problems. Because of its lack of finances, Botswana's refugee relief program does not go much beyond providing haven and minimal support while the refugees await transfer to more permanent facilities in Zambia. Even so, the refugees are a drain on finances that could otherwise be used for national development plans. Botswanan officials also worry about the potential impact of large numbers

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of dissident refugees on the country's student population and opposition political parties. There is little, however, Botswana can do to cope with the refugee problem; it does not have the forces to stem the daily flow of Rhodesian refugees into Botswana even if it wanted to.

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The Zambian Connection

The Zambian Government has always willingly accepted refugees from Botswana. Zambia may be close to the point, however, where a further influx of refugees will pose too great an economic and security burden for the government to handle. The economy is already plagued by serious food shortages and distribution problems, and a continued influx of refugees doubtless will

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25X1 force the government to turn increasingly to international sources such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Red Cross to provide food and shelter. [REDACTED]

Zambian officials are also worried that the continuing influx of refugees and the resultant growth in the size of the guerrilla forces are undermining the government's ability to maintain law and order. There are now probably as many ZAPU guerrillas and recruits in Zambia as there are soldiers in the national defense forces. Renegade guerrillas pose a serious problem, particularly around Lusaka, despite the efforts of Zambian and ZAPU security forces to bring banditry under control. Given the lack of food and medical services now available to the guerrillas, the further swelling of their ranks will only aggravate this problem. [REDACTED]

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Nigeria: Islamic Divisions and Civilian Politics (U)

As Nigeria heads toward a scheduled changeover to civilian rule next October, it is evident that long-standing Islamic divisions and rivalries in the predominantly Muslim north will be increasingly important factors in the country's future political life. The existence of intra-Muslim differences takes on added significance because the president of a civilian government--providing there is a successful transfer of power--will probably be a Muslim, given the fact that the more populous north has the largest bloc of regional votes.

[REDACTED]

To the degree that intra-Muslim tensions in the north spill over into the political arena, there is heightened potential for the outbreak of serious communal violence during the politically delicate national election campaign ahead. Looking further along, religious differences among Nigerian Muslims are likely to further complicate a civilian regime's efforts to maintain stability as it tries to manage Nigeria's traditionally divisive ethnic and regional forces and rising popular economic and social demands. [REDACTED]

What follows is an effort to relate some apparent Islamic trends in Nigeria and their possible impact on emergent civilian politics.

[REDACTED]

Background of Islam in Nigeria

Nigeria has the largest Muslim population of any black African state south of the Sahara. Muslims make up at least 47 percent of the total population of 70

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million or more and have always exercised strong political influence. Islam is believed to have been introduced to northern Nigeria in the 13th century by traders and clerics from northeast Africa and the Middle East. It did not become firmly established until the 15th century, and only after a 19th century jihad (holy war) by Fulani tribal leader and empire builder Usuman dan Fodio did Islam dominate all of the far north. [REDACTED]

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Islam today is spreading slowly southward, especially among the major Yoruba ethnic group. Nigerian Islam is gaining adherents in pagan areas at a faster rate than Christianity because it requires less change in traditional beliefs and tribal practices. Between 95 and 98 percent of all Nigerian Muslims are considered to be orthodox Sunni Muslims. [REDACTED]

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The major Hausa-Fulani ethnic group and the smaller Kanuri peoples are the most Islamized tribal groups in the north. They have been organized at the local level since the 19th century into a number of feudalistic, theocratic states or emirates. Emirs--who are both religious and tribal leaders--retain considerable spiritual and temporal influence, although their political power has been substantially reduced since Nigerian independence in 1960 by modern institutions. [REDACTED]

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Nigeria's former British rulers created a loose federation uniting the traditionalist north with the more Western and Christianized southern regions. When Nigeria gained independence, politics polarized around three regional parties and, because the north had the population edge, the party dominated by the traditional Muslim establishment gained control of the government. Muslim domination of national politics ended with the military's takeover in 1966. Since then, various military regimes have carried out reforms aimed at reducing the north's disproportionate political influence, which had fueled bitter ethnic discord in the early 1960s and led ultimately to civil war. These reforms have led to the passing of the once monolithic-appearing north and allowed the ethnic and political diversity that has always existed there to manifest itself. The creation of 10 ethnically oriented states in the former northern administrative region has broken the hold the Hausa-Fulani aristocracy once had over smaller Muslim ethnic groups

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and minority tribes. Local government reforms have also sharply eroded the administrative power of the emirs.

Intra-Muslim Trends and Issues

While they try to present a united front to the rest of the country, Nigerian Muslims themselves are divided. The titular spiritual head of all Nigerian Muslims is the aged Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Abubakar III. He is the most senior of northern traditional leaders and heads the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs. Located in Kaduna, this umbrella group serves as a coordinating body for all Nigerian Muslims in matters of religion and culture. The Sultan of Sokoto also heads the Nigerian branch of the Qadiriyya brotherhood, to which most of the north's traditional rulers belong. Qadiriyya Islamic practices derive from the teachings of jihad leader Usuman dan Fodio.

Since the 1950s, the Qadiriyya have lost ground to the rival Tidjaniyya, which is now the largest Islamic sect in Nigeria whose adherents are principally younger Nigerians. The Tidjaniyya reportedly are more puritanical and favor a more orthodox form of Islam than do the more tribally influenced Qadiriyya.

Kano City is the principal Tidjaniyya center and its main leader is the former emir of Kano, Alhaji Muhammadu Sanusi. He was forced to abdicate as emir in 1963, apparently because his activist leadership of the Tidjaniyya brought him into conflict with the north's Qadiriyya-dominated political establishment. Differences between the Tidjaniyya and Qadiriyya reportedly sparked rioting on occasion in the early 1960s, and there has been some resurgence of problems between the two sects in the last two years that has led to clashes or near violence. Several northern cities have issued regulations to avert problems by barring anyone who lacks a municipal license from Islamic preaching.

Aside from the two major Islamic sects, there are small numbers of northern adherents to other brotherhoods, such as the Hamaliyyah and Ahamadiyyah, which are regarded by most other Nigerian Muslims as heretical.

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The Ahamadiyyah, to which a sizable number of Yoruba Muslims in southwestern Nigeria belong, is the third largest sect in Nigeria and represents a relatively detribalized form of Islam and stresses reconciling Islamic teachings with the modern world. [REDACTED]

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Reformist ideas reflecting Wahhabi influence--introduced by young, well-educated Nigerian Muslims--are having a growing impact. These reformers, who have lived in other Muslim countries and made the pilgrimage to Mecca, have been detribalized in varying degrees by their education and experience. They have brought back ideas of Muslim brotherhood and are seeking a new authority. They are questioning tribally influenced practices of Nigerian Islam, such as the prerogatives of their traditional local leaders, and are addressing the question of how to balance Islamic tenets with leftist ideologies and modern ideas of social welfare. The movement emphasizes greater purity in Islam and the precedence of Islamic Sharia law over the traditional rights of local rulers. The key public figure of the Wahhabi view in Nigeria is Alhaji Abubakar Mahmud Gummi, who recently stirred considerable reaction with a successful challenge to the Sultan of Sokoto on a point of religious doctrine. Gummi heads the Kaduna-based Jama'atu Wasril Islam (JNI), the national Islamic organization, which is the largest Muslim organization in Nigeria. The Young Muslims Congress of Nigeria is another center of Wahhabi influence.

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Political rivalries in the 1950s before independence saw the main northern party periodically unleash political thugs, known as the Jamyyar Mahaukatar or society of madmen, against both non-Muslim southerners and rival northern Muslims. Since independence, every Nigerian Government has refrained from allowing radical Arab organizations like the PLO from operating in Nigeria to avoid aggravating tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims in the country. [REDACTED]

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Impact of Islam on Current Politics

Tensions stemming from Nigeria's religious diversity clearly are felt in the political arena, but it is difficult to ascribe political behavior solely to religious motivations. Other factors are often simultaneously at play, particularly competition rooted in sectional, tribal, ideological, and personal relationships. []

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Northern Muslims in the constituent assembly last year staged and lost a controversial battle, which seriously aggravated north-south tensions for a time, aimed at establishing a federal Sharia court of appeals under Nigeria's new constitution that is to guide the civilian government after October 1979. From time to time there have been attempts by the north--perhaps in response to Tidjaniyya influence--to establish more aggressively the primacy of Islamic law over Nigeria's common law system in areas where Muslims constitute a clear majority. The Sharia court issue quickly became as much a symbolic north-south test of strength for regional power in Nigeria's future government as a reflection of differences over the role of religion. The Sharia court proposal was most strongly pushed by young, politically inexperienced Muslim northerners in the constituent assembly. Following the court defeat, they turned to the traditional northern establishment for leadership. These predominantly Qadiriyya figures, who felt that the Sharia issue was overblown, decided to live with the defeat for the time being. Neither the Sultan of Sokoto nor lesser emirs have publicly supported the Sharia issue. The strength of Tidjaniyya in Kano state, however, could help explain the adamant public stand of that state's constituent assembly members on the Sharia issue long after the rest of the north accepted the situation. []

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It is quite possible that Muslim northerners under civilian rule may try to reopen their divisive proposal for a federal Sharia court of appeals, which many southerners reject as regional favoritism and as an effort to give greater governmental sanction to Islam as a state religion.* If the northerners do reopen the issue, their

*The new constitution, like all previous Nigerian constitutions, provides for a secular state with freedom of religion. (U)

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strategy presumably would be to attempt to win southern support for an amendment providing for such a court in exchange for northern backing for the creation of additional states in Nigeria's federal system. Northerners would be seeking to capitalize on widespread sentiment in the more ethnically diverse south for the creation of more states to enhance the region's political importance.

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[REDACTED]

In preparing for civilian rule, the military regime has registered five political parties to compete in national elections later this year. Three of them are northern Muslim-based parties, but only one--the National Party--can be considered a major group. The National Party is the dominant party in the north and apparently is the strongest nationally at this time. It represents a major effort by the Muslim north to paper over its many differences and create a broad regional front in direct response to the debacle of the Sharia court defeat. The party is aimed at reasserting political control over the national government like the northern region exercised in the first republic. [REDACTED]

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The National Party has a strong resemblance to its predecessor of the early 1960s, the former ruling Northern People's Congress (NPC) party. The National Party, like the NPC, is the party of the traditionalist Muslim north and its top leadership is drawn from old guard politicians who were prominent in the NPC. The National Party's presidential candidate, Shehu Shagari, is considered a protege of the late Sarduana of Sokoto, Ahamadu Bello, who led the NPC and served as premier of the former northern region until he was assassinated in the January 1966 Army coup. Ahamadu Bellow himself was a direct descendant of the 19th century jihad leader Usuman dan Fodio. [REDACTED]

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Despite the party's conservative appearance, it seems to have arrived at a somewhat uneasy alliance between the older generation of northern Muslims and younger, "new breed" politicians who are prominent in the party's lower ranks. It can be assumed that many "new breed" politicians are influenced in varying degrees by Tidjaniyya Islamic views and by Wahhabi reformist ideas. [REDACTED]

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Like all other major parties, the National Party asserts it is committed to national unity, freedom of religion, and social progress. Its platform calls for, among other things, a review of the question of creating additional states (which may be related to plans to re-open the Sharia court issue) and for a review of the position of local traditional rulers to provide them "befitting functions" and "representation in the legislative process of the nation." These planks, which seem to have Islamic overtones, can be interpreted as an effort by the National Party leadership to bolster regional support in the north and to attract votes countrywide. [REDACTED]

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Dissident northerners, who are opposed to what the major National Party stands for, are mainly gathered around Aminu Kano, whose political stature looms far larger than does the small People's Redemption Party (PRP) he heads. Northern political observers believe the PRP is the weakest of Nigeria's five parties. Its failure so far to name a presidential candidate or to declare its intent to contest elections this year suggests the party will for some time be preoccupied with organizing. Nevertheless, the party's importance stems from its proclivity toward political violence and because it may represent a nascent gathering of Muslim forces that could take on considerable political importance in coming years. [REDACTED]

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Aminu Kano, an old-line politician who projected something of a leftwing socialist image during the first republic, was one of the first northerners to challenge the traditional establishment and emirate system. Because of this, he enjoys considerable intellectual prestige among antiestablishment northerners. The PRP resembles the small radical party he founded in the early 1960s, then as now, in protest against the traditionalism of the major northern party. [REDACTED]

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The PRP is based in Kano city--the principal center of Tidjaniyya Islam--and has its firmest base of support in Kano state. Apparently, there was some connection between Aminu Kano's old Northern Elements Progressive Union Party and the "reformed Tidjaniyya" or the more religiously extreme wing of Tidjaniyya Islam. Religious rivalries may partly underlie political competition between the PRP and the major National Party, which has the

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support of the north's predominantly Qadiriyya local traditional rulers. Several violent clashes, requiring police intervention, have already occurred in Kano city this month. Rivalry between the precursors of the two parties resulted in a succession of violent confrontations in the north in the 1950s and early 1960s. The latest clashes suggest that this tradition of intra-Muslim political violence will continue. [REDACTED]

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The PRP is built around a somewhat disparate collection of younger, better educated Muslims with a generally reformist and xenophobic outlook. They are for the most part intellectuals, academics, and a scattering of leftwing northern socialists and trade unionists who feel a philosophical kinship with Aminu Kano. [REDACTED]

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Spokesmen for the PRP combine populist politics and progressive rhetoric with Islamic erudition. They generally decry the major northern party as reactionary and bent on reasserting the power of emirs. The PRP platform calls for a "new social order" that would free the common man from oppression by either traditional or modern elites, advocates complete national control of the economy, and favors more vigorous pursuit of the liberation of southern Africa. (U)

Party leader Aminu Kano reportedly is in ill-health, and his incapacitation would leave the group without a nationally known figure. One likely successor is Mohammed Abukabar Rimi, who is considered one of the leading young northern politicians of Kano state. A British-educated former journalist, he was one of the leading promoters of the federal Sharia court of appeals in the constituent assembly. [REDACTED]

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What influence Muslim dissidents now associated with the PRP may have on the larger northern political scene will depend on their ability to generate wider Muslim support. Prime targets include the northern university community and recent graduates--among whom there reportedly is growing sentiment for "Muslim unity and power," hard-pressed urban dwellers, petty traders, and poor farmers. [REDACTED]

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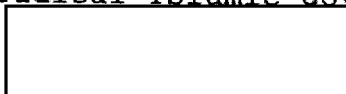
The foregoing review of apparent religious and political trends in the Muslim north leads us to venture these tentative conclusions:

- The seeds are present for a continued and probably slowly escalating challenge to the traditional religious-political establishment in the north by dissident reformist Muslim forces, for which the advent of civilian politics seems likely to provide a greater outlet.
- This challenge will result from time to time in violent intra-Muslim clashes, which a future civilian government may be less inclined or able to control than the current military regime.
- Dissident challenges in the form of pressure for a return to more orthodox Islamic practices or to obtain greater constitutional sanction for Islamic law threaten to make religion a more overtly political issue than heretofore in Nigeria and to heighten traditional north-south strains.

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- The existence of intra-Muslim divisions in the north, particularly if they are more overtly manifested in a civilian political environment, may offer some more tempting targets of opportunity for radical Islamic governments to try to exploit.



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FOR THE RECORD (U)

NIGERIA-BRAZIL: An official visit to Brasilia earlier this month by the second ranking member of Nigeria's military regime resulted in six bilateral agreements that call for significantly increased economic cooperation; the two regionally influential states have been trying in recent years to forge closer ties. Less developed Nigeria views Brazil as a potentially important source of economic benefits and wants closer political relations on the grounds that each country is the most important in its geographic area. Brazil is seeking closer ties with Nigeria as a way of strengthening Brasilia's overall relations with black Africa and its influence in the Third World. (C)

The Nigerians have expressed satisfaction with the visit by armed forces Chief of Staff Brigadier Yar'Adua. They hope mainly to benefit from joint business ventures and an exchange of technology under the newly signed economic, trade, and technical agreements. Brazil would like to break into the West African market beginning with exports of manufactured goods and services to Nigeria, and reportedly will consider a \$100 million line of credit to Lagos. The two sides failed to reach agreement on the sale of more oil to Brazil, which now imports 29,000 barrels of Nigerian crude daily, because Lagos refused to consider concessional prices. (C)

Politically, the visit fell short of Brazilian hopes to cement a "special relationship" with Nigeria and it is regarded by the Geisel government as only a qualified success. The Nigerians, for their part, are privately disappointed by Brazil's reluctance to extend material support to black Africa's struggle against white minority rule.

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